

Distracted drivers endanger themselves, other motorists, passengers and pedestrians.

Many injuries happen in predictable, preventable ways.

Don't entertain distractions while you drive. Your attention should be on driving. Everything else can wait.

Distracted Driving

- Distracted driving is driving while engaged in any activity that diverts attention from the primary task of driving.¹
- Distractions such as reaching for, dialing or texting on a phone increase the risk of crashing three times.²
- Distractions are classified as visual, manual or cognitive- anything that takes your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel and your mind off driving, respectively.³
- Texting while driving, including messaging, emailing or updating social media, involves all three types of distractions making it the most dangerous type of distraction.²
- The Trooper Nicholas Dees and Trooper Keith Burch Act of 2015 prohibits drivers in Oklahoma from composing or reading text messages and emails, updating social media or capturing photo or video images while the vehicle is in motion.
- Using a phone hands-free while driving is also a distraction. Studies have shown it is no more safe than using a handheld phone.²
- On average, in Oklahoma, distracted drivers cause 20 crashes per day or one every 72 minutes.⁴
- Reading a text message while driving 55 mph is the equivalent of driving the length of a football field blindfolded.²

Prevention

- Do not entertain distractions of any kind when you drive.
- Silence or turn off your cell phone while driving, and put it out of sight and reach.
- Set your navigation system before you begin your trip. Avoid things like eating and personal grooming while driving.
- Parents can teach their teens the dangers of distracted driving and set rules to discourage them from driving distracted (e.g., have a parent-teen driving contract stating that they will not drive distracted).

Internet Resources

1. Insurance Institute for Highway Safety:
<http://www.iihs.org/iihs/topics/t/distracted-driving/topicoverview>
2. Distraction.gov: <http://www.distraction.gov/>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
http://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/Distracted_Driving/index.html
4. Oklahoma Highway Safety Office:
http://ok.gov/ohso/documents/FS2013_Distracted_Electronic.pdf
http://ok.gov/ohso/documents/FS2013_Distracted_Other.pdf

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